

CLAIM AMENDMENTS

1. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament having a first end and a second end, ~~said the~~ first end and ~~said~~ second ends defining a first longitudinal axis, and ~~said the~~ graft ligament having a substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said the~~ first longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ first end and ~~said the~~ second end, ~~said the~~ graft ligament comprising:

a tendon having a third end and a fourth end, ~~said the~~ third end and ~~said~~ fourth ends defining a second longitudinal axis therebetween, said tendon having a non-uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said the~~ second longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ third end and ~~said the~~ fourth end, and said tendon having a first portion, a second portion, and a third portion in series along ~~said the~~ second longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ third end and ~~said the~~ fourth end; ~~and~~

wherein the second portion has a given mean cross-sectional thickness, and the first portion and the third portion each have a smaller mean cross-sectional thickness than the given mean cross-sectional thickness; and

a securing material securing at least one section of ~~said the~~ first portion, ~~said the~~ second portion, and ~~said the~~ third portion with another at least one section of ~~said the~~ first portion, ~~said the~~ second portion, and ~~said the~~ third portion so as to form ~~said the~~ third end and ~~said the~~ fourth end, respectively, and so as to form ~~said the~~ graft ligament with a substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said the~~ first longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ first end and the second end.

2. (Original): A graft ligament according to claim 1 wherein said securing material is a suturing material.

3. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 2 wherein ~~said the~~ at least one section of ~~said the~~ first portion, ~~said the~~ second portion, and ~~said the~~ third portion are sutured to ~~said the~~ another at least one section of ~~said the~~ first portion, ~~said the~~ second portion, and ~~said the~~ third portion at ~~said the~~ third end and ~~said the~~ fourth end, respectively.

4. (Original): A graft ligament according to claim 1 wherein said tendon is harvested from a human body.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 5 1 wherein ~~said the~~ first tendon portion and ~~said the~~ third tendon portion are each folded against ~~said the~~ second tendon portion and sutured thereto, respectively.

7. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 6 wherein ~~said the~~ first tendon portion is folded against and sutured to ~~said the~~ second tendon portion along a first given length, and ~~said the~~ third tendon portion is folded against and sutured to ~~said the~~ second portion along a second given length.

8. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 7 wherein ~~said the~~ first given length is shorter than ~~said the~~ second given length.

9. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 7 wherein ~~said~~ the first given length and ~~said~~ the second given length are substantially equal to one another.

10. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 7 wherein ~~the~~ a total length of ~~said~~ the first given length and ~~said~~ the second given length is equal to the length from ~~said~~ the first end to ~~said~~ the second end of ~~said~~ the graft ligament.

11. (Currently Amended): A graft ligament according to claim 7 wherein ~~the~~ a total length of ~~said~~ the first given length and ~~said~~ the second given length is less than the length from ~~said~~ the first end to ~~said~~ the second end of ~~said~~ the graft ligament.

12. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 6 wherein said first portion and said third portion are each folded upon itself along a third given length and a fourth given length, respectively, and sutured thereto, said second portion is folded upon itself and sutured therebetween, and said first portion and said third portion are sutured to one another.

13. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 12 wherein said third given length and said fourth given length are equal to one another.

14. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 12 wherein said first given length is longer than said third given length.

15. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 6 wherein said second portion is folded against itself, a bone core is disposed between said first portion and said third portion, and said first portion and said third portion are secured together with said bone core disposed therebetween.

16. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 15 wherein said folded second portion, forming a first segment and second segment, is sutured therebetween.

17. (Withdrawn): A graft ligament according to claim 1 further comprising at least two of said tendons secured together to form said graft ligament.

18. (Currently Amended): A method of making a graft ligament having a first end and second end, ~~said the~~ the first end and ~~said the~~ the second end defining a first ~~a~~ longitudinal axis, and ~~said the~~ the graft ligament having a substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said the~~ the first longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ the first end and ~~said the~~ the second end, ~~said the~~ the method of making ~~said graft ligament~~ comprising:

providing a tendon having a third end and a fourth end, ~~said the~~ the third end and ~~said~~ the fourth ends defining a second longitudinal axis therebetween, ~~said the~~ the tendon having a non-uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said the~~ the second longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ the third end and ~~said the~~ the fourth end, and ~~said the~~ the tendon having a first portion, a second portion, and a third portion in series along ~~said the~~ the second longitudinal axis between ~~said the~~ the third end and ~~said the~~ the fourth end; and

wherein the second portion has a given mean cross-sectional thickness, and the first portion and the third portion each have a smaller mean cross-sectional thickness than the given mean cross-sectional thickness; and

securing at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion to another at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion so as to form ~~said~~ the third end and ~~said~~ the fourth end, respectively, and so as to form ~~said~~ the graft ligament having a the substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along ~~said~~ the first longitudinal axis between ~~said~~ the first end and the second end.

19. (Currently Amended): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 18 wherein the step of securing at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion to another at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion includes the use of a suture material.

20. (Currently Amended): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim ~~18~~ 19 wherein ~~said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion are in series from said third end to said fourth end, and further wherein~~ the step of securing at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion to ~~said~~ the another at least one section of ~~said~~ the first portion, ~~said~~ the second portion, and ~~said~~ the third portion includes the steps of folding ~~said~~ the first portion against ~~said~~ the second portion along a first given length, folding ~~said~~ the third portion

against ~~said~~ the second portion along a second given length, suturing ~~said~~ the folded first portion to ~~said~~ the second portion, and suturing ~~said~~ the folded third portion to ~~said~~ the second portion.

21. (Currently Amended): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 20 wherein ~~said~~ the first given length of ~~said first~~ the folded first portion is shorter than ~~said~~ the second given length of ~~said third~~ the folded third portion.

22. (Currently Amended): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 20 wherein ~~said~~ the first given length of ~~said first~~ the folded first portion is equal to ~~said~~ the second given length of ~~said third~~ the folded third portion.

23. (Withdrawn): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 18 wherein said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion are in series from said third end to said fourth end, and further wherein the step of securing at least one section of said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion to said another at least one section of said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion includes the steps of folding said first portion against itself, folding said third portion against itself, suturing said folded first portion, suturing said folded third portion, folding said second portion against itself, and suturing said folded second portion.

24. (Withdrawn): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 18 wherein said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion are in series from said third end to said fourth end, and further wherein the step of securing at least one section of said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion to said another at least one section of said first portion, said second portion, and said third portion includes the steps of folding said second portion against itself, positioning a bone core between said first portion and said third portion, and securing said first portion and said third portion together with said bone core disposed therebetween.

25. (Withdrawn): A method of making a graft ligament according to claim 24 further comprising the step of securing said folded second portion to itself.

26. (New): A method of making a graft ligament having a first end and second end, the first end and the second end defining a first longitudinal axis, the graft ligament having a substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along the first longitudinal axis between the first end and the second end, the method comprising:

providing a tendon having a third end and a fourth end, the third end and the fourth end defining a second longitudinal axis therebetween, the tendon having a non-uniform cross-sectional thickness along the second longitudinal axis between the third end and the fourth end, and the tendon having a first portion, a second portion, and a third portion along the second longitudinal axis between the third end and the fourth end; and

securing at least one section of the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion to another at least one section of the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion so as to form the third end and the fourth end, respectively, and so as to form the graft ligament having a substantially uniform cross-sectional thickness along the first longitudinal axis between the first end and the second end;

wherein the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion are in series from the third end to the fourth end, and wherein the step of securing at least one section of the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion to the another at least one section of the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion includes the steps of folding the first portion against the second portion along a first given length, folding the third portion against the second portion along a second given length, suturing the folded first portion to the second portion, and suturing the third portion to the second portion; and

wherein the first given length of the first folded portion is equal to the second given length of the third folded portion.